



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

State Board of Licensed Social Workers

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SENATE BILL 177 (2009) FACT SHEET

- PRACTICE ACT LIMITED TO CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK (MANDATORY LICENSURE)
- EXPANDED TITLE ACT PROTECTING THE TERM "SOCIAL WORKER"
- NEW LICENSING OPTIONS AT BACHELOR AND MASTERS LEVEL (TITLE PROTECTED / NON-CLINICAL)

OVERVIEW OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS:

- Permits voluntary registration for non-clinical Bachelor-level Social Workers (RBSWs)
- Permits voluntary licensure for non-clinical Masters-level Social Workers (LMSWs)
- Authorizes application, licensure/registration and renewal fees for RBSWs and LMSWs
- Mandates licensure for those practicing clinical social work only, effective January 1, 2011 (anyone practicing clinically must hold a clinical license or certificate, i.e. LCSW or CSWA)
- Expands title protection to the term "social worker" – that term can only be used by those licensed, certified or registered by the Board (penalty authority by the Board starts January 1, 2011)
- Expands sanction authority by the Board of Licensed Social Workers by allowing the Board to maintain jurisdiction over revoked licensees
- Increases civil penalty to max. \$3000 per violation (\$5,000 title act/unlicensed practice violations)
- Changes the name of the Board to "Board of Licensed Social Workers"

SB 177 supplements the Board's existing licensure program, which is currently limited to clinical-social work and is not mandatory. The Board's current program includes Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs, a title-protected term), a Masters-level independent general clinical license, and Clinical Social Work Associates (CSWAs – a title-protected term describing those with MSW degrees who are working under LCSW supervision toward LCSW licensure).

Additional information and exemptions:

This law allows the Board, as of January 1, 2011, to prohibit the practice of clinical social work without an appropriate clinical license (LCSW, CSWA), with limited exemptions for clergy acting in their ministerial capacity, those who hold CADC certification and practice within the scope of CADC certification, and those who are working in employment settings in which they are recognized as meeting QMHA or QMHP criteria. The latter exemption only applies to clinical social work services performed in that employer setting. The Board will have authority to sanction the unlicensed practice of clinical social work with penalties of up to \$5,000 per violation.

In addition, the law adds strong title protection for the term "social worker". Individuals will no longer be allowed to refer to themselves as social workers without licensure, certification or registration by the Board. Non-clinical social workers at the Bachelor's and Master's level who currently cannot become licensed by the Board will have the option to apply for licensure as an LMSW or registration as an RBSW, but will not be required to do so.

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